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25. NEW RECORD OF A RARE LOACH *NOEMACHEILUS MONILIS* FROM ANAIMALAI HILLS, WESTERN GHATS, TAMIL NADU

Noemacheilus monilis was originally described by Hora in 1921, based on two specimens collected from Bhavani river, Mettupalayam, Nilgiris. It has subsequently been reported only once from the same locality by Rajan (1955) who found only two specimens. Rajan (1965) also studied its ecology and food habits. The fish were found to feed on ephemeropteran and dipteran larvae, besides coleopterans and hemipterans. Jayaram *et al.* (1982) in their fish fauna of the Cauvery system listed this species only on the basis of earlier records. Menon (1987), in his revision of *Noemacheilus*, based his description of *N. monilis* on the two type specimens only. The extensive faunal collections from the Nilgiris, made by the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) have no representatives of this species. However, Easa and Shaji (1997) reported its presence in abundance in part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve in Kerala. All the reports so far have been from areas of the Nilgiris north of the Palghat Gap in the Western Ghats.

During a recent survey of the Indira Gandhi Wildlife Sanctuary by the ZSI, the third author collected this species from the Chinnar, a small rivulet flowing eastwards and draining into

the Cauvery system. This is the first record of this species south of the Palghat Gap in the Anaimalai Hills.

Description: 1 ex., 39.0 mm SL, Reg. No. F. 5218, ZSI/SRS, Chinnar River, Anaimalai Hills, 7.viii.1997, Coll. M.B. Raghuanathan.

D. 3/8; P. 1/9 & 1/10; V. 8; A. 3/5; C. 19; L. 1. complete.

The morphometric details of the specimen are as follows (in mm): Total length 49.0, standard length 39.0, head length 9.8, body depth 5.6, length of snout 4.0, eye diameter 2.0, inter-orbital width 2.8, length of barbels: inner rostral 3.6, outer rostral 4.5, maxillary 3.2, predorsal distance 20.2, post-dorsal distance 19.3, distance from pectoral fin base to pelvic fin base 11.3, from pelvic fin to anal fin 10.2, from anus to anal fin 1.9, length of caudal peduncle 5.3, height of caudal peduncle 4.5, height of dorsal fin 6.4, length of pectoral fin 7.4, length of pelvic fin. 6.2, length of anal fin 5.6.

In all the biometric characters, body proportions and colour pattern, the specimen agrees with the description given by Menon (1987). The only difference observed, also mentioned by Rajan (1955), is the presence of 8 branched rays in the dorsal fin.

The present collection extends the distribution of *N. monilis* from Nilgiris in the Central Division of the Western Ghats beyond the Palghat Gap to the Anaimalais in the Southern Division. This is of zoogeographical significance as the Palghat Gap forms a dividing line between the Central and Southern Division of the Western Ghats (Bhimachar 1945). Silas (1951), in his paper on the fish fauna of Anaimalai and Nelliampathi hills and their zoogeographical significance, suggests that the Cauvery and Ponnai watersheds which connect the Central and Southern Divisions are likely to facilitate the dispersal of fishes from north to south.

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26. THE OCCURRENCE OF SPOT PUFFIN IN KALAKAD-MUNDANTHURAI TIGER RESERVE, SOUTHERN WESTERN GHATS

The Spot Puffin *Appias lalage* belonging to the Family Pieridae is found in Northeast Himalayas from Simla, Assam to Burma (=Myanmar) (Wynter-Blyth 1957) and is classified as rare in south India (Sathyamurthy 1966). Its occurrence has not been stated authentically in the Western Ghats. Even Wynter-Blyth (1957) and Larsen (1987 a-c, 1988) do not report it in their exhaustive survey of the Nilgiris. However, there is a lone record of this species from Neterikal in Kalakad-Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve (KMTR) of Agasthyamalai range, in the southern Western Ghats (Sathyamurthy 1966).

Ferguson (1891) collected *Hyposcritia lalage* from the Eastern slopes of the Travancore hills. *H. lalage* is a synonym of *Appias lalage* (Talbot 1939). There has been no sighting or collection of this species in recent times.

During a survey conducted from 1990-1996 in the wet evergreen forest, *A. lalage* was encountered frequently. A few vagrants were also seen in the deciduous forests. Besides, it is a common mud-puddler along with 2 sympatric species *A. indra*, and *A. albina* after the monsoon at every corner of the road cutting through the forest. *A. lalage* was more abundant than the